

REMARKS

Claims 1-16, 28-49 and 53-69 were presented for examination and were pending in this application. The Examiner restricted claims 60, 61, 66, and 67; rejected claim 64 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph; rejected claims 1-16, 28-33, 35-44, 49 and 53 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,389,127 to Vardi et al. ("Vardi")¹; rejected claims 58-59, 62-65, and 68-69 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by the cited ICQ.COM document (hereinafter ICQ); rejected claim 34 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vardi; and rejected claims 45-48 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vardi in view of the cited MicroSoft NetMeeting document.

Applicant herein amends claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 13, 14, 28, 32, 33, 34, 43-48, 53, 56, 58, and 64. Dependent claims 70 and 71 are added. Independent claim 58 is not amended. Claims 60, 61, 66, and 67 are withdrawn with traverse in response to the restriction in the Office Action.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the telephone interviews of October 7, 2004, and October 18, 2004. At this time, agreement was reached concerning claim amendments that would patentable distinguish over Vardi, either singly or in combination. Applicant thanks the Examiner for her time and trouble. The amendments discussed during the interview are made herein to claim 1 and 9 and similar amendments are made to independent claims 28, 32, 53. The dependent claims are patentable at least for the same reasons as the independent claims.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Applicant amends claim 64 to obviate the rejection under § 112, second paragraph.

Independent Claim 58 and its Dependent Claims

The Examiner rejected claims 58-59, 62-63 under § 102(e) as being anticipated by ICQ. Claim 58 recites:

58. user interface displayed on a target system, comprising:

¹ The Examiner's statement on page 3, paragraph 2, of the Office Action that claims 17-27, 49, and 53 are rejected is assumed to be a typographical error since some of these claims are not pending.

a display showing an ID of a requesting user who has requested a meeting with the target; and

a display showing an availability status of a requesting user, the availability status sent by the requesting user. (emphasis added)

Thus, an embodiment of the invention has a display (on the target's screen) that shows all the requesting users who have asked to have meetings with the target. The display will also show the availability of the requesters.

ICQ shows a contact list (see page 5). A contact list is a list that shows "your" friends and associates who use ICQ. Thus, a contact list contains all people whom you know in the system. It is not a list of people with whom you have requested a meeting and it is not a list of people who have requested a meeting with you. The purpose of the contact list is to show who is online, not who has requested a meeting.

ICQ shows an online alert (see page 9). An online alert allows a user to select one or more people on his contact list. He is then alerted when that person comes online. This is not the same as requesting a meeting. Moreover, there is no disclosure or suggestion in ICQ that the selected person's display shows an ID and status of a "requesting user" who has selected him. All that occurs as a result of an online alert is that the selecting user receives an indication that his selected user is now online.

ICQ allows a user to set his availability code on the contact lists of others (pages 16, 17, 29). There is no indication that, when a user requests a chat, his availability code is displayed, as recited in claim 58. The cited pages merely disclose contact lists. Merely indicating that a user is available for chat is not the same as requesting a meeting with a specific user.

ICQ allows sending a chat request (see page 36). Sending a chat request is not the same as sending a meeting request. In the example of page 36, UIN 2861658/Genny has requested a chat. Thus, the popup box is displayed on the system of the "chatee." Moreover, page 36 does not disclose or suggest showing an availability status of the user requesting the chat (i.e., Genny's status). Here, Genny could have logged off or become unavailable, but this is not indicated. Note, for example, the top of page 37, which states that the chatee will realize that the requester is unavailable only when no chat session begins. Thus, ICQ teaches away from display of the requester's availability status as required in claim 58.

Dependent claims 59, 62, and 63 are patentable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 58.

Independent Claim 64 and its Dependent Claims

The Examiner rejected claims 64, 65, 68, and 69 under § 102(e) as being anticipated by ICQ. Claim 64 recites:

64. (Currently amended) A user interface displayed on a system of an owning user, comprising:

a display showing an ID of a requesting user who has requested a meeting with the owning user and an availability status of the requesting user, the availability status sent by the requesting user;

the display further showing an ID of a target user with whom the owning user has requested a meeting, and the availability status of the target user sent by the target user. (emphasis added)

Thus, an embodiment of the present invention will display both an ID and availability status of a user who has requested a meeting with an owner and an ID and availability status of a target user with which the owner has requested a meeting.

The ICQ document has been discussed above in connection with claim 53. As discussed there, ICQ does not show an ID and availability status of a user who has requested a meeting with a target. Claim 64 patentably distinguishes over ICQ for at least this reason.

Dependent claims 65, 68, and 69 are patentable for at least the same reasons as independent claim 64.

New claims 70 and 71 recite that the ID of the requesting user and the availability status of the requesting user are displayed in a single display box.

In sum, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims, as presented herein, are patentably distinguishable over the cited reference (including references cited, but not applied). Therefore, Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of these claims.

In addition, Applicant respectfully invites Examiner to contact Applicant's representative at the number provided below if Examiner believes it will help expedite furtherance of this application.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
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